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## TRIALS OF A HOUSEKEEPER.

By HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

I HAVE a tale of very homely grievances to present, but such as they are, many a heart will feel them to be heavy—the *trials of a housekeeper*.

"Poh!" says one of the lords of creation, taking his cigar out of his mouth, and twirling it between his two fingers, "what a fuss these women do make of this simple matter of managing a family!"

Now prithee, good brother, listen to my story, and see how much you know about it. I had been married about three months, and had been previously in love in the most approved romantic way, with all the proprieties of moon-light walks, serenades, sentimental billet-doux, and everlasting attachment.

After having been allowed, as I said, about three months to get over this sort of thing and to prepare for realities, I was located for life as aforesaid. My family consisted of myself and husband, a female friend as a visitor, and two brothers of my good man, who were engaged with him in business.

I pass over the two or three first days spent in that process of hammering boxes, breaking crockery, knocking things down and picking them up again, which is commonly called getting to housekeeping. As usual, carpets were sewed and stretched, laid down and taken up to be sewed over—things were reformed, transformed and conformed, till at last order began to appear. But now came up the great point of all. During our confusion we had cooked and eaten our meals in a very miscellaneous and pastoral manner, eating now from the top of a barrel, and now from a fireboard laid on two chairs, and drinking some from tea-cups and some from saucers, and some from tum-

blers, and some from a pitcher big enough to be drowned in; and sleeping, some on sofas, and some on straggling beds and mattresses, thrown down here and there, wherever there was room. All these pleasant barbarities were now at an end—the house was in order—the dishes put up in their places—three regular meals were to be administered in one day, all in an orderly, civilized form—beds to be made—rooms swept and dusted—dishes washed—knives scoured, and all the et-cetera to be attended to. Now for getting "help," as Mrs. Trollope says—and where and how were we to get it? We knew very few persons in the city, and how were we to accomplish the matter? At length the "house of employment" was mentioned, and my husband was despatched thither regularly every day for a week, while I, in the mean time, was very nearly despatched by the abundance of work at home. At length one evening, as I was sitting completely exhausted, thinking of resorting to the last feminine expedient for supporting life, viz., a good fit of crying, my husband made his appearance with a triumphant air at the door. "There, Margaret! I have got you a couple at last—cook and chambermaid!" So saying, he flourished open the door, and gave to view the picture of a little, dry, snuffy-looking old woman, and a great staring Dutch girl in a green bonnet with red ribbon—mouth wide open, and hands and feet that would have made a Greek sculptor open his mouth too. I addressed forthwith a few words of encouragement to each of this cultivated-looking couple, and proceeded to ask their names; and forthwith the old woman began to snuffle and to wipe her face with what was left of an old silk pocket-handkerchief, preparatory to speaking, while the young



lady opened her mouth wider, and looking around with a frightened air, as if meditating an escape. After some preliminaries, however, I found out that my old woman was Mrs. Tibbins, and my Hebe's name was Kotterin; also, that she knew much more Dutch than English, and not any too much of either. The old lady was the cook. I ventured a few inquiries—"Had she ever cooked?"

"Yes, ma'am, sartin; she had lived at two or three places in the city."

"I expect, my dear," said my husband, confidently, "that she is an experienced cook, and so your troubles are over," and he went to reading his newspaper. I said no more, but determined to wait till morning. The breakfast, to be sure, did not do much honour to the talents of my official, but it was the first time, and the place was new to her. After breakfast was cleared away, I proceeded to give direction for dinner; it was merely a plain joint of meat, I said, to be roasted in the tin oven. The "experienced cook" looked at me with a stare of entire vacuity; "the tin oven," I repeated, "stands there," pointing to it.

She walked up to it and touched it with such an appearance of suspicion as if it had been an electrical battery, and then looked round at me with a look of such helpless ignorance that my soul was moved. "I never see one of them things before," said she.

"Never saw a tin oven!" I exclaimed; "I thought you said you had cooked in two or three families."

"They does not have such things as them," rejoined my old lady. Nothing was to be done, of course, but to instruct her into the philosophy of the case; and having spitted the joint and given numberless directions, I walked off to my room to superintend the operations of Kotterin, to whom I had committed the making of my bed and the sweeping of my room; it had never come into my head that there could be a wrong way of making a bed, and to this day it is a marvel to me how any one could arrange pillows and quilts to make such a nondescript appearance as mine now presented. One glance shewed me that Kotterin, too, was "just caught," and that I had as much to do in her department as that of my old lady.

Just then the door-bell rang. "Oh, there is the door-bell!" I exclaimed; "run, Kotterin, and shew them into the parlour."

Kotterin started to run as directed, and then stopped and stood looking round on all the doors, and on me with a wofully puzzled air. "The street door," said I, pointing towards the entry. Kotterin blundered into the entry, and stood gazing up with a look of stupid wonder at the bell ringing without any hands, while I went to the door and let in the company, before she could fairly be made to understand the connection between the ringing and the phenomena of admission.

As dinner approached, I sent word into my kitchen to have it sent on, but recollecting the state of the head of department there, I soon followed my own orders. I found the tin oven standing out in the middle of the kitchen, and my cook seated à la Turk in front of it, contemplating the roast meat, with full as puzzled an air as in the morning. I once more explained the mystery of taking it out, and assisted her to get it on the platter, though somewhat cooled by having been so long set out for inspection. I was standing holding the spit in my hand, when Kotterin, who had heard the door-bell ringing, and was determined this time to be in season, ran into the hall, and soon returning, opened the kitchen door, and politely ushered in three or four fashionable-looking ladies, exclaimed, "Here she is!" As these were strangers from the city who had come to make their first call, this introduction was far from proving an eligible one; the look of thunderstruck astonishment with which I greeted their first appearance, as I stood brandishing the spit, and the terrified snuffing and staring of poor Mrs. Tibbins, who had again recourse to her old pocket-handkerchief, almost entirely vanquished their gravity, and it was evident that they were on the point of a broad laugh; so, recovering my self-possession, I apologized, and led the way to the parlour.

Let these few moments be a specimen of the four mortal weeks that I spent with these "helps," during which time I did almost as much work, with twice as much anxiety, as when there was nobody here, and yet everything went wrong beside. The young gentlemen complained



of the patches of starch grimmed to their collars and the streaks of black coal ironed into their dickeys; while one week every pocket-handkerchief in the house was starched so stiff that you might as well have carried an earthen plate in your pocket—the tumblers looked muddy, the plates were never washed clean nor wiped dry, unless I attended to each one; and as to eating and drinking, we experienced a variety that we had not before considered possible.

At length the old woman vanished from the stage, and was succeeded by a knowing, active, capable damsel, with a temper like a steel trap, who remained with me just one week, and then went off in a fit of spite. To her succeeded a rosy, good-natured, merry lass, who broke the crockery, burnt the dinner, tore the clothes in ironing, and knocked down everything that stood in her way about the house, without at all discomposing herself about the matter. One night she took the stopper from a barrel of molasses, and came singing off up stairs, while the molasses ran soberly out into the cellar bottom all night, till by morning it was in a state of universal emancipation. Having done this, and also despatched an entire set of tea-things, by letting the waiter fall, she one day made her disappearance.

Then, for a wonder, there fell to my lot a tidy, efficient, trained English girl—pretty and genteel and neat, and knowing how to do everything, and with the sweetest temper in the world. “Now,” said I to myself, “I shall rest from my labours.” Everything about the house began to go right, and looked as clean and genteel as Mary’s own pretty self. But, alas! this period was interrupted by the vision of a clever, trim-looking young man, who for some weeks could be heard scraping his feet at the kitchen door every Sunday night—and at last Miss Mary, with some smiling and blushing, gave me to understand that she must leave in two weeks.

“Why, Mary,” said I, feeling a little mischievous, “don’t you like the place?”

“Oh yes, ma’am.”

“Then why do you look for another?”

“I am not going to another place.”

“What, Mary, are you going to learn a trade?”

“No, ma’am.”

“Why then what do you mean to do?”

“I expect to keep house myself, ma’am,” said she, laughing and blushing.

“Oh, oh!” said I, “that’s it”—and so in two weeks I lost the best little girl in the world—peace to her memory!

After this came an interregnum, which put me in mind of the chapter in Chronicles that I used to read with great delight, where Bash, and Elah, and Tibni, and Zimri, and Omari, one after the other came on the throne of Israel, all in the compass of half-a-dozen verses. We had one old woman who stayed a week and went away with the misery in her tooth—one young woman who ran away and got married—one cook who came at night and ran off before daylight in the morning—one very clever girl, who stayed a month and then went away because her mother was sick—another who stayed six weeks, and was taken with fever herself,—and during all this time who can speak the damage and destruction wrought in the domestic paraphernalia by passing through these multiplied hands?

What shall we do? Shall we go for slavery or shall we give up houses, have no furniture to take care of, keeping merely a bag of meal, a porridge-pot and a pudding-stick, and sit in our door in real patriarchal independence? What shall we do?

*Answer*—Throw off that false and wicked pride which reckons useful labour a disgrace, and, as far as your station will allow, do your own “house work.”

## THE PALACES OF OUR BISHOPS.

ONE of the earliest acts of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners was to obtain powers to purchase new palaces for the bishops. The particulars of these transactions were obtained by cross-examination of the Secretary of the Commission before a House of Commons’ Committee in the year 1848. They may be detailed in brief words; the briefer, perhaps, the better, for they are transactions which one could earnestly wish were buried in oblivion.

The first palace which the Commissioners built was one for the new Bishop of Ripon. Estimates were accepted for its erection at a cost not to exceed



£10,000. The total sum spent upon it has been £14,724. This excess of expenditure was caused by the erection, by the bishop, of lodges, piers, gardener's house, "standing-room for four instead of two carriages," and "four additional stalls to best stables," besides his having incurred a charge of £400 for paper-hangings, £300 for carriage roads, £250 for a flower garden, and sundry minor expenses. The Commissioners discharged the amount with the remark, that "under the [above] circumstances they feel themselves justified in recommending a further charge upon the Episcopal Fund." So they began to provide for "spiritual destitution in populous places."

The Riseholme estate, the residence of the Bishop of Lincoln, formed before its purchase a portion of a larger estate, the value of which was estimated at £62,000. The Commissioners, at the recommendation of the agent of the bishop, who had himself become the owner of the estate, and without employing any valuer, purchased one-third in extent of this property (585 acres) for the sum of £39,406, the house being certified to be a fit and convenient residence for the Bishop of Lincoln, and the Commissioners purchasing it for that reason. After its purchase, the bishop, being one of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, sent in an estimate for repairing this "fit and convenient" residence; the estimate being drawn up by an architect who was brother-in-law of the agent and previous owner. This estimate, which amounted to £9,200, the Commissioners accepted. The bishop expended £14,000, the Commissioners paid the bill, and the total cost of the estate has been £52,194. The value of the bargain made by the Commissioners in the purchase of this property may be estimated from the circumstance, that the bishop's portion of the original estate was stated by the bishop's agent to pay £1 14s. per cent., while the remaining portion, retained by the agent himself, paid at the rate of five per cent.

Stapleton House, as a second residence for the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, was next purchased. The Order in Council drawn up by the Commissioners, which authorized the purchase of this property, stated that the house would "afford a fit and convenient residence for

the bishop." Nevertheless, it was found that to fit it for a bishop's residence a sum greater than the first cost of the estate might be conveniently laid out. The bishop's architect estimated these improvements to cost £3,000, but the Ecclesiastical Commissioners preferred to employ the services of the gentleman who had been engaged on the Ripon and Lincoln palaces. The repairs and alterations were consequently authorized, and were finished at a cost of £12,178, making the whole cost of the estate £23,908. Before purchasing this property no survey or valuation of it was made by the Commissioners, nor was any report of any kind laid before them, shewing its value. The Commissioners, however, we are told, "were satisfied that the estate was worth the money that was paid for it." The sequel to this transaction is as curious as it is characteristic. By an Order in Council of the 2nd February, 1859, the Commissioners were authorized to sell this palace, "with the lands and premises attached thereto," for the sum of £12,000, the Commissioners stating that "it appears to us that the said sum of twelve thousand pounds is a fair and reasonable price for the said house, with the lands and premises attached." Comment, in this case, is as needless as comparisons would be odious.

The purchase of Danbury Park as a residence for the Bishop of Rochester followed. Its price was £24,700, subsequently increased to £28,157, its value having been previously estimated by professional men, employed for his own information by a Member of Parliament, at from £16,000 to £18,000. The Commissioners gave between £80 and £90 per acre for this estate, while adjacent estates of a similar character had been purchased at an average of £53 per acre.

The Bishop of Oxford was the next debtor to the Commissioners. A grant having been made to his lordship of £3,500 for the improvement of his residence, on the condition that the expenditure should not exceed that sum, the bishop made application for a further grant of £1,300. At a meeting of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners it was "Resolved, that this measure be approved." Twelve months afterwards, the expenditure having exceeded both the first and



second grants combined, the bishop applied for sanction to a loan, on the security of the episcopal estates, of the sum of £1,836. 3s. 10d., the amount required to meet this deficiency. At a meeting of the Commissioners, it was resolved that they could not legally accede to this proposal. At the next meeting, however, it was ordered, on the motion of the Bishop of Oxford himself, that the opinion of the law officers on the case be taken. At a succeeding meeting, this opinion having been favourable to the scheme, the bishop was authorized to borrow the sum of £1,669, on the security of the property of the see, for the purpose applied for. It remains to add that this was not his lordship's last application. By an Order in Council, passed in 1858, the bishop was authorized to borrow a further sum of £350, by way of a second mortgage on the property of the see, for the further improvement of his episcopal residence.

It is scarcely necessary to enter into detailed explanations with respect to the remaining sums which have been authorized to be expended on episcopal residences. They consist of Worcester, £7,000; Exeter, £3,500; Hereford, £800; Llandaff, £9,054; Manchester, £19,037; and Norwich, £5,000. It remains to sum up the total cost:

Sees.	Cost.
Ripon.....	£14,724
Lincoln.....	52,194
Gloucester and Bristol.....	23,908
Rochester.....	28,157
Oxford.....	6,469
Worcester.....	7,000
Exeter.....	3,500
Hereford.....	800
Llandaff.....	9,054
Manchester.....	19,037
Norwich.....	5,000
Total.....	£169,843

Of the above sum, £57,702 has been paid out of the revenues of the Commission, the remainder has been obtained from the sale or mortgage of property belonging to the sees, the rents and proceeds of which would otherwise have been applied in the augmentation of small livings, or in the diminution of spiritual destitution. The claims of the distressed clergy, and of the religious necessities of the people, have thus been unhesitatingly sacrificed by the Commissioners—the

majority of whom sit on the episcopal bench—in order that bishops might live in luxury and splendour. After all, however, the recklessness and ill-judgment which have characterized their dealings are the most striking characteristics of this case. Extreme self-seeking has blinded them. The bishops' palaces are monuments of extravagance and guilt, such as men can only erect to their own disgrace. One thing, however, was necessary to complete their dishonour, and this, also, the Commissioners furnished. After voting the greater portion of the above amounts, they blandly write that they cannot “withhold the expression of their deep regret that the limited amount of their present means must still leave untouched a considerable portion of that spiritual destitution, the removal of which was the main object of the Crown in issuing the original Commission of Inquiry, and of Parliament in confirming its recommendations”!

### SHE WILL BE MISSED.

BY MATILDA W. BEALE.

SHE will be missed! The young and fair,  
The bright, the beautiful and gay,  
With grief will long remember her  
Who from our midst has passed away.  
She will be missed! A *father's* arms  
Will yearn to clasp his child in vain—  
His eyes will miss the tender glance  
That ne'er may meet his own again.  
She will be missed! Oh, naught can fill  
The vacuum in a *mother's* heart!  
No mortal hand unite again  
The strings there sadly torn apart.  
She will be missed! A sister's heart  
Will ache to meet her fond caress;  
A brother deeply mourn for her  
Whose lips his own no more may press.  
She will be missed! No more fond care—  
No anxious watching by her bed—  
No more conflicting hopes and fears:  
All these are o'er now she is dead!  
She will be missed! A vacant place  
At table, and at time of prayer,  
At home, at church, morn, noon and  
night,—  
Missed all the time, and everywhere!  
“Gone, but not lost!” oh, this we know!  
We trust the boundless love of God;  
“He doeth well! His will be done!”  
We say, and kiss His chastening rod.



### CHINESE VIEW OF HUMAN NATURE.

IN the writings of Mencius, a Chinese author, he maintains that the nature of man is good. "From the feelings proper to it we see that it is constituted for the practice of what is good. *This is what I mean in saying that the nature is good.* If men do what is not good, the blame cannot be imputed to their natural powers."

First: he maintains that there are in man a natural principle of righteousness, a natural principle of propriety, and a natural principle of apprehending moral truth. "These," he says, "are not infused into us from without. We are certainly possessed of them, and a different view is simply from want of reflection." He illustrates this by saying—"All men have a mind which cannot bear to see the sufferings of others. My meaning may be illustrated thus: Even now-a-days, i.e. in these degenerate times, if men suddenly see a child about to fall into a well, they will, without exception, experience a feeling of alarm and distress. They will feel so not as the ground on which they may gain the favour of the child's parents, nor as the ground on which they may seek the praise of their neighbours and friends, nor from a dislike to the reputation of having been unmoved by such a thing. From this case we may see that the feeling of commiseration is essential to man, that the feeling of shame and dislike is essential to man, that the feeling of modesty and complaisance is essential to man, and that the feeling of approval and disapproval is essential to man. Men have these four feelings just as they have their four limbs." "When men having these four principles yet say of themselves that they cannot develop them, they play the thief with themselves."

The second proof that human nature is formed for virtue: it is a constitution where the higher principles should serve the lower. Human nature—the inward frame of man—is with Mencius a *system or constitution*. He says, for instance: "There is no part of himself which a man does not love; and as he loves all, so he must nourish all. There is not an inch of skin which he does not love, and

so there is not an inch of skin which he will not nourish. *For examining whether his way of nourishing be good or not, what other rule is there but this, that he determine by reflecting on himself where it should be applied.*"

"Some parts of the body are noble and some ignoble; some great and some small. The great must not be injured for the small, nor the noble for the ignoble. He who nourishes the little belonging to him is a little man, and he who nourishes the great is a great man."

Again—"Those who follow that part of themselves which is great are great men; those who follow that part which is little are little men."

The great part of ourselves is the moral elements of our constitution; the lower part is the appetites and passions that centre in self. He says finely—"There is a nobility of Heaven and there is a nobility of man. Benevolence, righteousness, self-consecration and fidelity, with unwearied joy in what is good—these constitute the nobility of Heaven. To be a duke, a noble, or a great officer—this constitutes the nobility of man."

There is one passage very striking—"For the mouth to desire *sweet* tastes, the eye to desire *beautiful* colours, the ear to desire *pleasant* sounds, the nose to desire *fragrant* odours, and the four limbs to desire ease and rest—these things are natural; but there is the appointment of Heaven in connection with them; and the superior man does not say of his pursuit of them, 'It is my nature.' The exercise of love between father and son, the observance of righteousness between sovereign and minister, the rules of ceremony between host and guest, the display of knowledge in recognizing the worthy, and the fulfilling the heavenly course by the sage—these are the appointments of Heaven; but *there is an adaptation of our nature for them*; and the superior man does not say, in reference to them, 'It is the appointment of Heaven.'"

From these paragraphs it is quite clear that what Mencius considered as deserving properly to be called *the nature of man* was not that by which he is a creature of appetites and passions, but *that by which he is lifted up into the higher circle of intelligence and virtue.*



## TWO STRAWBERRIES.

## THE FATAL RESULTS OF SUPERSTITION.

AN awful tragedy took place in France the other week, partly the result of a Popish superstition. We are constantly persuaded it is a harmful thing in the education of either young or old, to beset the path of life with superstition. There are no perfectly harmless superstitions; they are all more or less attended with some disastrous results. We should always be careful, too, in the education of the young, and in our charges to our families, not to exalt foibles into sins and crimes, or any harmless enjoyment or recreation into a breach of divine law. The Roman Catholic Church is often more severe in its reprobation of some ritual transgression than of moral guilt, like the devotee that refuses to eat flesh because it is Friday, but refused not to lie and swear with the same breath. It is a well-known practice of the Roman Catholic Church not to taste food before partaking of the Lord's Supper. So, contrary to the usage of the Apostolic Church, they have changed the time from the evening supper-time till morning for this celebration. The Apostolic Church knew no such scruple, was not cognizant of any such law among its members. The lamentable tale we are now about to relate is from a secular paper.

"The *Echo de la Marne* gives an account of a suicide and a murder by members of the same family at Loisy (Marne), the two crimes being the consequence of an incident puerile in itself—the eating of two strawberries by a child. The daughter of a M. Renaux, a resident in the above-named village, was to make her first communion a week ago. In the morning, however, before proceeding to the church, while standing before a dish of strawberries, forgetting for a moment the solemn ceremony in which she was about to take part, she inadvertently tasted the fruit. This was, of course, sufficient to exclude her from the communion on that day. The child, nevertheless, attended the service, but without joining in it, and the curé, learning from her the cause of her abstention, spoke to her kindly, and told her to return the following morning. She reached home and stated what had taken place to her parents, and the latter appear to have

reproached her in severe language, and to have terrified her by an exaggerated description of the consequences of her fault. After retiring to bed the child's terror seems to have overcome her reason, as she rose, dressed herself, and secretly leaving the house fled across the field and took refuge at a farm at some short distance. Here she was recognized, but instead of being sent back home she was taken to the school which she attended in the village. In the mean time the mother, happening to enter the room where her daughter slept, found the bed empty. She was seized with a terrible misgiving that her daughter must have drowned herself. The mother instantly rushed in the direction of the Marne and was seen no more. Four days later her body was found on a low bank at Solanges. A brother-in-law of Madame Renaux, residing in the same neighbourhood, had for some time previously given signs of mental derangement, and the disappearance of his brother's wife, for whom he had a great respect and affection, sufficed to entirely unsettle his mind. The night preceding the morning on which the body was found he became most violent, and from time to time took up his fowling-piece. His wife, who was alone in the house with him, was struck with terror, but dared not move. In the morning he went out with his gun, but was shortly after seen returning in a state of great excitement. A farm servant had just time to inform Madame Renaux of her danger, and she concealed herself in a garret. The servant, however, paid for his devotedness with his life, as Renaux turned on the man and discharged the gun into his breast, killing him on the spot. Renaux next pointed the second barrel to his own forehead, and blew out his brains. It was at the moment that this tragedy was being accomplished that the body of Madame Renaux was found at Solanges. The murderer leaves a son, and the murdered man a wife and two children."

After this we can never hear but with painful feelings this fast of the Roman Catholic Church, so rigidly adhered to, and remember at the same time the misery of a whole family and the awful tragedy caused by the eating of two strawberries.



### THREE POPULAR MISTAKES ABOUT RELIGION.

A CELEBRATED preacher of the last century begins one of his discourses by a reference to the mistakes made about religion in the following eloquent language: "Although man's capacity of religion is to be considered as the crown of his nature, and as what constitutes his chief pre-eminence over the brute creation, yet in no character has he appeared so much an object of compassion and of contempt as in his religious character. As nothing raises him so high in the scale of creation as rational religion, so nothing sinks him so low as gross superstition. If it be asked, What is the subject, the power of contemplating which is the proudest distinction of the human understanding? I answer, God. If it be asked, What is that subject upon which the mistakes of man have been most disgraceful to his understanding, have thrown the darkest blot upon his intellectual honour? I answer, God. If it be inquired, What is that principle which is most eminently calculated to animate the social virtue of man, to produce in him the faithful friend, the kind relative, the good neighbour, the patriot citizen, the useful member of that society with which he is connected, and the fervent lover of all mankind—what is it that is most excellently adapted to make him all that men admire, and all that society wants?—I reply, with readiness and with pleasure, Religion. If it be inquired, What is it that has most powerfully operated to rob society of his services, that has frozen his social affections to the most torpid insensibility, that has buried his talents in the profoundest inactivity, that has turned his humanity to the hardest stone, that has sullied his sword with its foulest stains? I reply, with sorrow and with shame, Religion. If it be said, as with truth it may be said, that there is no joy so sublime, no superiority to anxiety so serene, no sense of security so tranquil, as that which religion inspires,—with equal truth it may be said that of all the melancholy in which man has been ever plunged, the deepest has been religious melancholy; of all the excessive solicitude by which he has been harassed, that which has respected the divine acceptance of his services has

disquieted his bosom the most; and of all the fears that have chilled his heart, the most icy he has ever felt have been his fears of God."

We are sure there is little less reason now than one hundred years ago to set aside the language we have quoted. Although it is true that successful efforts have been and are still made to simplify the subject of religious faith and life, yet the great mass of church and chapel-going people still mistake the shadow for the substance; their ritual performances, their irrational creeds, their grave looks on a sabbath and moods of spiritual elation, for religion. The Christian church has committed two evils—it has forsaken the living fountains and hewn out to itself broken cisterns that can hold no water. How very many at the present time regard their religious meetings of *momentary excitement* as the best proofs of their religious life! The preacher that can administer the most powerful shock to their nature, that can excite a meeting to spasms of feeling, that can raise a very tempest of shouting and groaning, a perfect hurricane of noise which issues in fainting and screaming, and so-called revivalist conversion,—such a preacher is a "man of God," "full of the spirit of religion." The people confound animal passion with spiritual influence, vociferous gesticulation with the power of grace, and the terrors of their mind for the operations of the gospel. We need shew the people how little of religion there is in all this excitement, how wrong to trust to those feelings as the evidence of their conversion and improved life. Felix trembled, got excited, under the searching reproof of Paul, but we have no evidence that he got any further on his way to a better life. The Scriptures never represent his fear as a proof of his Christian life.

The people must be more plainly and emphatically taught than ever they have been that religion is *not* momentary excitement; that those moods of spiritual ecstasy are among the poorest proofs of spiritual-mindedness. The excited Baal-worshippers and dancing dervishes and other idolaters have the like fits of spasmodic religion. The people must be taught the calmness and peacefulness of the Christian religion, exemplified in the



life of him of whom it is said, "a bruised reed he would not break, a smoking flax he would not quench, and no man could hear his voice in the street;" this was the spirit and life that exemplified religion better than all those uproarious meetings and exciting occasions too common among some churches.

If momentary excitement is not religion, it is equally true that *melancholy* is not religion. All kinds of substitutes have been used for the spirit and life of true religion. Men and women dress themselves in peculiar and mourning dresses, look very grave and sad, speak in a kind of sepulchral tone, practise austerities and pains of the flesh, and they set up all this for religion. Christ seemed to be aware that this would be done among Christians as it had been done and was done among other religious people. Christ warned off his disciples against long faces and sad figures, and told them to appear like other men even at the very time when they fasted in the spirit, that it might not be seen of men. Many have been repulsed from the Christian church by the gloomy and forbidding looks of its members. The living heart revolts at times from the vinegar-faced disciple as from a dead corpse. Not a few have thought that if they must be religious to get to heaven, they would put it off to the last thing they would do as a kind of passport to the skies, for they were led to believe that religion and melancholy were the same thing. It is true that all kinds of painful austerities have been encouraged as religious ordinances, and the joys and natural happiness of life frowned upon as contrary to the divine pleasure. This great and lamentable mistake, that melancholy is religion, must be exposed by the words of the religious teacher, and by the happy and contented life of the religious professor. We have enough in our everyday life to make us sad without making the spirit of religion a garment of mourning and heaviness. We must learn to serve the Lord with gladness of spirit, and come into His presence with singing and cheerfulness of life. We must learn to rejoice in the Lord with joy unspeakable and full of glory; so we will do when we entertain just views of God, His government and all His gracious

designs touching human happiness and immortal destiny. The perverted and distorted views so common among many Christian churches touching religious truth and the tenets of a true Christian faith have done much to make the gospel sad tidings, instead of that glad tidings to all people proclaimed by the angels to the shepherds.

There is one other mistake we would just now briefly mention, and that is, *mystery* is often mistaken for religion. Now *mystery* is not religion. If the readers of the Bible would only reflect on the fact that the word "religion" only occurs a very few times in the Scriptures, yet the Bible is the record of the religious experience of the Jews for many thousands of years! The words wisdom, sound judgment, mercy, truth, righteousness, holiness, &c., these are the words that set forth religion in the Bible. No mystery hangs around those words in common life, no mystery is implied in any of those words in the Bible. Religion is made a thing level to every capacity by the divine writers. The Gospels say it is love to God and man; Paul says it is love; so do Peter and John. James gives a definition of religion in the following words: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this—to visit the fatherless and widow in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Warmth of affection and purity of life—this is religion. How much evil has been done by attempting to throw around it dark and mysterious airs! This and that church has its mysterious rites, or mysterious faith, or mysterious conversion, or some other dumb and meaningless show, set up for religion. "Mystery" is written on the forehead of the churches. We say, away with such tricks and arts, that savour more of some pagan priesthood than of the Christian religion. Let men's minds be unburdened and unfettered from those speculations of dark ages and of meddling priests. Let us proclaim aloud to all the earth the way of holiness on which no wayfaring man may err, and let us cry down mystery, momentary excitement and melancholy; these are not religion; they are the mistakes of fallible men, not the truth as it is in Jesus.



### A GOOD REASON FOR NOT PAYING CHURCH-RATES.

IN the reign of George II., a younger son of a sturdy English Catholic yeoman learned the "art and mystery" of barber-surgery. He married into an old Catholic family, and commenced business in a certain town in one of the midland counties of England. He was in due course called on by the parson's clerk for what are called Easter dues. The barber-surgeon refused to pay, and so the parson himself called and said, "My clerk informs me that you refuse to pay the Easter dues; why do you object?" The barber-surgeon answered, "I never attend your church." The parson said, "That is your own fault; you ought to attend." Barber: "You know I go to chapel." "That is also your own fault," replied the parson; "the church is open to all, and I am there, or my curate is there, to conduct the service; so it's your own fault if you don't attend church." The barber-surgeon replied, "I have now an engagement at the Hall; Sir John wants a new wig; but I will think the matter over, and we can talk of it some other time."

The parson was not long in receiving a bill from the barber-surgeon for a quarter's attendance, which, in addition to shaving and hair-cutting, included charges for making, mending and dressing wigs, bleeding and cupping, drawing teeth, and dressing the parson's bad leg, so that a respectable bill was made out. The parson was not slow to call on the Catholic barber for an explanation. "Why have you sent me this bill?" said the parson. "What is there wrong in it?" asked the barber. "Wrong in it!" cried the parson; "why you have never done anything for me." "That's your fault," replied the barber-surgeon; "I and my men and apprentices are here at your service." "But," said the parson, "you know I'm attended to by the other barber, who is a Churchman; it's not to be expected I should give my custom to you, who never come to church." The barber answered, "You ought to come to me; everybody ought; and it's their own fault if they don't; and no reason, according to your own argument, why you should not pay the bill I have sent you."

NORMA TUTA VERITAS.

### EARTHLY TROUBLE.

"Who never mourned, hath never known  
what treasures grief reveals—  
The sympathies that humanize, the tenderness that heals—  
The power to look within the veil and learn  
the heavenly lore—  
The key-word of life's mysteries, so dark to  
us before."

SOME of the noblest people beneath the sun are those who have been disciplined by trouble. As "the purest metal is produced from the hottest furnace, and the brightest thunderbolt from the darkest storm," so the godlike capacities in them are developed in the school of adversity. Courage to endure without murmuring; resignation to submit without rebellion; sympathy for others which can make itself to be felt, and love which penetrates all external covering, and clings around the living souls of the unfortunate;—are the most clearly manifest in many of those who have passed through a fiery ordeal.

"Weeping with those who weep," our tears are precious to them when they flow out from the fountain of a similar experience in bereavement. If your child has departed out of your home, you can be a blessed helper to those who to-day or to-morrow will bend to bestow the last kiss upon the white, cold forehead of their beloved. Indeed, we may almost say that there is no true sympathy, and charity, and neighbourship, without sorrow.

Humboldt tells us that in South America, "on the sterile declivity of a rock, there grows a tree whose leaves are dry and tough, whose thick, woody roots can hardly penetrate the stony soil; for several months in the year no refreshing rain moistens its foliage; the branches seem dead and shrivelled." And yet from the stem of this cow-tree there flows the richest nourishing milk, which is gathered as the food of the dark-skinned natives and their children. Thus may it be with the devout human soul under circumstances of adversity.

The benefit of sorrow is seen in the opportunities it affords of faith in heaven. It leads the way to confidence and trust in the Lord; and we come at length to understand that "the winged sorrow which comes down as a dark angel, which gathers our beloved objects from



us, and garners up our treasures, is as much an agent of mercy as the blessing that scatters sunlight to us." Now we come to the promise; there is consolation to the mourner; there is a soft hand to wipe away tears, which is revealed by faith. Wonderful as it seems, in our view, the most serene implicit faith in God is not usually found in those whose career of life has been unchequered by misfortune, but in those who have come up out of great tribulations. It was when Job sat in sackcloth and ashes that he exclaimed, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him!" "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Paul and Silas sang their joyous songs in the dungeon of the persecutor; the martyrs from the flames saw the very heavens opened; and some of the weakest among us are the richest and strongest in that victory which overcometh the world—Christian faith. The safety of his home is magnified to my child in his troubles, which to him are great sorrows; the Prodigal with a full purse can doubt the security of his father's house, but in a condition of fearful want his only desire is to abide in it for evermore; and the bereaved who used to be in unbelief are now as little children, crying out, "Thy will, O God, not ours, be done." Yes, this is the position from which we get clear views of the contrast between the human and the heavenly, and while we must let go our trust in the one, with longing and prayers we seize hold on the other.

### A LION IN THE WAY.

FROM THE CHILD'S PRESENT.

"Yes, there is always a lion in his way," said Mr. Hall to a gentleman with whom he was conversing in the parlour. Justin entered the parlour at that moment. He heard the remark of his father, but was a good deal puzzled as to its meaning. He had read about lions, and, like most children, was greatly interested in them.

He wished very much to know to whom his father had reference in the remark above quoted, but he could not think of asking him while he was engaged in conversation. Some boys would have said at once, in violation of good breeding and good grammar, "Who are you talking about?"

But Justin had been well brought up, and besides had a good natural sense of propriety. He sat down and kept silent, hoping that he should hear something that would enable him to infer the fact which he wished to know. In general, he loved to *think out* things instead of troubling his friends with numberless questions.

Justin did not succeed in thus learning the fact desired; so as soon as the visitor had departed, he came up to his father, and rested his elbows on his father's knees, and acted as though he wished to ask a question respecting the propriety of which he had some doubt.

"You have some request to make, my son," said Mr. Hall.

"Yes, sir; I wish to ask you of whom you were speaking when you said there is always a lion in his way."

Mr. Hall saw from Justin's manner that he understood the expression literally. He was somewhat amused at the idea, but refrained from laughing, lest he should hurt Justin's feelings, or discourage his laudable curiosity. He replied to Justin's question: "I was speaking to Mr. Harris: you must be careful not to let a lion get in your way."

"If a lion had a mind to get in my way, how could I help it? I am not as strong as a lion."

"What kind of a scholar is Robert Carr?"

Justin wondered what led his father to ask that question, and his wonder prevented him from replying with his usual promptness. He finally answered in a hesitating manner, "I don't know."

"Don't know! don't you belong to the same class with him?"

"Yes, sir."

"How does it happen, then, that you don't know what kind of a scholar he is?"

"I thought I ought not to say anything against my classmates."

"That is very well; you should never say anything to the disadvantage of another unless it is true, and unless you are required by some good reason to tell it. But while you try to obey this rule, you should not transgress another one by saying what is not true. I know that Robert is not a good scholar, and yet he has a very good mind: why is he not a good scholar?"



"Because, sir, he has no resolution. If the lesson looks long, he will say, 'I can't get it,' and won't try; and if he comes to a hard place in the lesson, he gives right up."

"There is always a lion in his way, then."

Justin's eye brightened, for now he understood the reason of his father's asking about Robert, and the meaning of the expression, *a lion in the way*. "I know what you mean now: by telling me not to let a lion get in the way, when I undertake a thing I must not get discouraged and give it up."

"That is it."

"What if the thing is wrong?"

"You must not undertake it."

"What if I don't find it out till after I have begun?"

"Then stop short."

"Some young lions get in your way sometimes, don't they, Justin?" said his mother, who entered the parlour in time to hear the latter part of the conversation.

"I don't know, ma'am," said Justin, doubtfully.

"Have you finished your kite yet?"

"No, ma'am."

"Have you finished weeding your flower-bed?"

"Not quite."

"Have you read your new book through?"

"Partly."

"What has hindered you—the little lions?"

"I guess so," said Justin, smiling, though he felt the reproof contained in his mother's remarks.

Justin, like a great many other boys, began a great many things which he never finished. This is a very bad habit: it should never be formed, or, if formed, should be corrected at once, otherwise it will grow worse and worse. There are some men whom you can never depend upon to get anything done. In boyhood they fell into the habit of beginning things and not ending them.

"How shall I keep the little lions away?" said Justin.

"By always finishing everything which you begin," said his father.

"But I get so tired of some things."

"No matter: you must finish them for

the sake of the habit—must finish them for the sake of finishing them. If you always keep to this rule, you will be more careful about beginning things. You will think more before you act, and will plan more wisely. When I was a boy, I was very much like you. They used to call me great at beginning, but I seldom completed anything. My father saw it, and took me in hand, and made me finish whatever I began, if possible. In that way I corrected the habit, and I should be glad if you would correct it in your case, my son, without the interposition of my authority."

Justin resolved that he would follow his father's example.

#### RULES FOR HOME TRAINING.

1. FROM your children's earliest infancy, inculcate the necessity of instant obedience.

2. Unite firmness with gentleness. Let your children always understand that you mean what you say.

3. Never promise them anything, unless you are sure you can give them what you promise.

4. If you tell a child to do anything, shew him how to do it, and see that it is done.

5. Always punish your children for wilfully disobeying you, but never punish in anger.

6. Never let them perceive that they can vex you, or make you lose your self-command.

7. If they give way to petulance and temper, wait till they are calm, and then gently reason with them on the impropriety of their conduct.

8. Remember that a little present punishment when the occasion arises, is much more effectual than the *threatening* of a greater punishment if the fault is repeated.

9. Never give children anything because they cry for it.

10. On no account allow them to do at one time, what you have forbidden, under the like circumstances, at another.

11. Accustom them to make their little recitals with perfect truth. But do not encourage tale-bearing.

12. Teach them that self-denial, not self-indulgence, is the appointed and sure method of securing happiness.



## THE MIRACLES OF JESUS.

By GEORGE LUCAS.

THERE are persons sincerely attached to the cause of Christianity, no doubt, who are sceptical respecting the verity of the miracles ascribed to Jesus. It must, however, be clear enough to all who read the Gospel histories that the writers intended their readers to regard Jesus as one who professed to be a worker of miracles. The Gospel historians evidently present Jesus to the ages as one possessed of supernatural powers; and if we are to concede ordinary credit to the record, Jesus placed himself exactly in that point of observation, from whence he must have been looked upon by the apostolic witnesses either as a worker of miracles or as an impostor.

Did Jesus really work miracles? It is clear he believed he did "the works." If they were not really performed, Jesus was certainly not less than self-deceived. To suppose him self-deceived, is simply to conclude that the miracles did not occur, whatever might have been the appearances brought to the surface.

But is there any reasonable probability that Jesus could under the circumstances labour under such a delusion? If we were to assume that he was specially liable to the weakness of self-deception, it would only be fair—if we would avoid self-deception—to ask ourselves if it is likely that the persons on whom he professed to operate would be equally disposed to encourage him in, and contribute to uphold, his fanaticism. It would avail little to assure the man who was born blind—that he could see, while the precious and long-coveted light of heaven refused to illuminate his prison-house. If Jesus could "play upon" himself, it is not very probable he would find it so easy to juggle that poor soul, in its marble cell, panting in vain to realize one peep out upon the glorious world beyond.

The miracles Jesus professed to perform were such as should only have been ventured upon by one consciously certain he possessed power equal to their execution, or undertaken by a monomaniac. To select for his experiment one who was born blind—a case traditionally beyond the power of remedy—was either an indication of conscious strength or of imbecile weakness. The very attempt to perform the miracles ascribed to Jesus could not but issue in triumphant success or entail instant disaster.

The power to perform miracles was precisely that qualification which it was especially desirable, if not indispensable, such a messenger as Jesus professed to be should stand invested with. It soon became noised abroad that this personage declared himself to be charged by the Deity with a special message to mankind—that he had come from heaven to deliver it—that he had seen the Father, and possessed plenary powers derived from the eternal source of authority. How natural, especially to a captious, scrupulous and marvel-loving people like the Jews, that they should at once propose to bring his

pretensions to the test, and demand some irrefragable proof of his veracity! How fitting it was that one presenting himself in the character of Messiah should be equal to meet such demands; not only so, but that he should be disposed on all suitable occasions benevolently to exercise them, as well as render these powers tributary to dispel the doubts of all honest inquirers respecting the genuineness of his character and the validity of his claims to the Messiahship! Had not the prophets of ancient time performed miracles, and thereby asserted the divinity of their mission? Could it be, then, that one professing to be "the Son of God" himself would have been listened to, even for one moment, had not his credentials been endorsed by equal, if not more perspicuous, pledges of divinity?

There are some, in our age, who have taken exception to the entire Christian system, because it appeals to miracles in substantiation of its external authority. Such objections really astonish and confound us. But so much we dare predicate:—had the history of Christianity been destitute of the miraculous—especially, had the life of Christ ignored extraordinary events, instead of interweaving them, as it does, in the entire web of his career—their finding of Christianity would have pronounced it entirely unworthy of confidence; and for the very reason, above all others, that it had failed to produce miracles in proof of its divine origin. Indeed, there would be abundant reason for rejecting the Messiahship of Jesus at this moment in the absence of those extraordinary developments his history unfolds. It was upon the miracles chiefly—"the works"—that he claimed the credence of the people; and the moral impression which the miraculous in the Christian narratives supplies, is that which most irresistibly impresses the general mind with the fact of Christ's divine origin and mission. Yes. "Other religions point to miracles in support of their pretensions." We know it. But that circumstance tends rather to strengthen our conviction of the truth of the Christian miracles. It indicates that faith in the supernatural is God's appointed method of ultimately establishing the Christian religion on a basis universal as the moral appetite for the miraculous, which He alone has implanted in human souls. It is a prepared soil for the genuine seed, which is one day to bring forth a glorious harvest.

But let us suppose the miracles of Jesus were not realities—were fictions. What is now before us? We have a number of reputed witnesses ascribing to Jesus the performance of the most astonishing deeds in human history, describing fabulous events with all the circumstances apparently of time, place, names of persons, peculiarity of conversation and speciality of issue; declaring that their own eyes beheld these wondrous events transpire, and that multitudes of other persons, known to them and to whom they were known, were present when they occurred. If these events did not transpire, we must at



least ascribe to the narrators prolific and vagarious powers of imagination. Shall we conclude they were simply mistaken? Perhaps the conclusion itself would be a still greater error. We know of no reason, either pertaining to the witnesses themselves or their surroundings, which should invalidate their testimony.

To any who are dubious of the value of miracles in Christianity, it might be of service to look ahead and descry in what latitude the breakers are to be found. If the apostolic historians were mistaken respecting the miracles of Jesus, we cannot regard them as sufficient authority for any physical fact whatever. What proof have we that Jesus died, was buried, escaped from the tomb, ascended into the heavens—nay, that he ever lived—if they cannot be taken as evidence for the miracles? Simpletons were they indeed, if incompetent to determine whether or not the loaves, which were reported to have fed so many thousands, were prepared by the usual process, and transferred to the wilderness by ordinary physical causes, or produced on the spot by spontaneous miracle. Admit they were mistaken in this and recorded cases of a similar character, and the man who could consent to listen to them as historians any longer, would establish the fact of his own extreme simplicity.

But some of these men were not peculiarly liable to be taken on the blind side. The scepticism of the disciple—Thomas—was surely of the genuine ring. Hearing with his own ears did not avail with him. Nor would he even trust his own eyes. Nothing could be admitted as evidence by Thomas that he could not lay his hand upon—material, tangible proof, or no confession of faith could be extracted from Thomas. And then as to Paul, was he in a haste to run after fictions? Was it likely that this man could be attracted to the profession of a faith whose chief corner-stone was an unparalleled deception? Not so! And yet we find Paul—who hated all shams—a firm believer in the miracles of Jesus.

But several of these men, who are the reputed witnesses of the miracles of Jesus, themselves claimed to be invested with power to perform miraculous works. If they ever had a shade of doubt as to the genuineness of Christ's miracles, that doubt would vanish now. There they are, declaring themselves to possess the same ability! And most certainly they were. Either a ray of the glorious majesty of the Master had inspired their own souls, or they had gravitated to the infamous moral condition he had reached, and consented to perpetuate the very tricks which had earned their Hero sufficient notoriety to transfix him to the accursed tree. A rare opening, indeed, for the exercise of their newly-acquired functions!

No! The supernatural cannot be ignored in Christianity.

The miracles, and the moral character of Christ as well as of his disciples—who claim to have handed down the record—must stand

as an everlasting testimony to the supernatural, or fall into ignominious contempt. If, indeed, we profess to receive the resurrection of Jesus as an historical truth, we thereby recognize the supernatural. This was the crowning miracle of Christianity. This admitted, the miraculous is affirmed; and the miracles of Christ, and those of the apostles too, are but an extension of the same supernatural agency, having in view one grand object—the diffusion of Christianity in the earth.

Passing strange must be the state of mind of that minister—minister of what?—who rings out an uncertain note respecting the miracles of Christ! Where, in the domain of sacred history, do his feet find a fragment of solid rock? What can he do with the New Testament, a book professing to be written by the men who declare, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables." Have ye not? Then the miracles of Jesus are sublime realities! If they are not, ye did follow fables so cunningly devised that, after eighteen centuries have passed, they remain the master-puzzle even to the sages of all nations under heaven.

Marvellous ostracism! Fatal to Christianity! The New Testament is clearly pitched on the supernatural key. It claims for Jesus a supernatural origin; it places him not only at the head of the human race, but at the head of the moral creation; it declares he uttered words such as never man uttered; it continually points to his preternatural acts; it depicts him vanquishing death, mocking the grave, vanishing into the spiritual world. Now what does all this mean? Evidently it appeals to us for a faith which lies beyond the region of any credit we give to the ordinary events of human life. There is not a solitary page in the history of Jesus which does not bear swift witness against the man who even doubts the supernatural and the miraculous in Christianity. A disbeliever in miracles should be ashamed of the whole affair of historical Christianity, and hold it up to the contempt of every honest man.

Take the supernatural element out of the records of the life of Jesus, and what then? A greater difficulty presents itself. Words so pure, lives so sublime, inspiration so penetrating, heroism so unconquerable, teachings based on principles so eternal, were never, so far as our age has ascertained, evolved from humanity before—come not thence now—cannot even be looked for. But if the miracles are not genuine, we have had wiser men than the apostles—men who would not have been deceived quite so soon; if they are frauds, we have had—nay, have now—many far better men. If this majestic moral fruit has come from a tree so defective or so vile, will any one point out another miracle so unaccountable as this?

We should think as wisely of preserving our coats, after having separated the warp from the weft, as of dividing between the miraculous history of Jesus and Christianity.

With the eloquent author of the "Study



of the Bible," we entirely agree—who says, "Eject the miraculous from the New Testament and the book unquestionably falls into contempt. If it be not authoritative and divine, it is clearly not worth the trouble of perusing, except, indeed, as a literary miracle, a monster of good and evil, which, having first slain the falsehoods of paganism, now waits in turn to be devoured by higher truth to which it has itself given birth and development."

"O God, our Heavenly Father, who hast been pleased, in infinite compassion, to communicate to us thy Holy Word through men subject to like passions with ourselves, help us to discern in this thy wisdom and thy love; and grant that a revelation so adapted to our natures and necessities may be received by us with thankful joy, and by thy grace be made effectual to our eternal peace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord."

#### TALKING WHEN ALONE.

Mrs. FONDERSMITH was out improving a piece of a June day in making calls, when suddenly a thunder-shower came up. She stumbled into the first cottage she saw, where a poor woman sat sewing; evidently a poor woman, with that mild type of countenance which would make you think her name was Mary, or ought to be. She arose and courteously offered a chair, which the lady accepted with the air of one bestowing a favour.

"Do you think we shall have a wild storm?" said Mrs. Fondersmith, looking down upon her hostess like one upon a mountain dropping a word to somebody in a valley.

Mrs. Dale replied, "Yes, ma'am, it looks like it;" and might have added to herself, sarcastically, "Does this butterfly *condescend* to me? Unexampled glory of littleness!" But Mrs. Dale was never sarcastic.

The storm grew severe; the house rocked in the wind like a cradle, and Mrs. Fondersmith, sitting in the middle of the room, began to fidget.

"To think of a house without blinds!" murmured she.

"But it's nice to look out doors, you know," said Mrs. Dale. "It's so grand to see the lightning zigzag across the sky. It makes you think, somehow, of a gold ladder let down from heaven to earth, only it's gone again in a twinkling."

"You're not so frightened as I am, or you couldn't be so sentimental," returned Mrs. Fondersmith, with chattering teeth.

"No, ma'am, I ain't at all afraid of lightning, if that's what you mean. The Lord won't call me home till He gets ready, and when He sends for me it won't be a moment sooner than I want to go."

"You must be a happy woman," said she, wonderingly.

Mrs. Dale shook her head. "Oh, not very," said she. "I used to be happy, when I had a husband and four children. I tell you, those were times when I used to take

comfort. I shouldn't dare to live 'em over again! But for four years, I've lost a child every year, and six months ago my dear good husband was killed, while he was at work on the railroad. Now I'm all alone as you may say, and I don't know as you can call me so dreadful happy!"

"No, indeed!" exclaimed Mrs. Fondersmith, taking a step or two down her mountain of self-importance; "you have really been afflicted, my poor woman!"

"Yes, ma'am, but it's been good for me! Why, it's the best thing in the world, and so I've told the Lord a great many times. Sometimes I wake up in the morning, dreaming like, and thinks I, what shall I get for breakfast? And then it comes all over me that there ain't anybody in the house but me, and it seems so still that it a'most stuns me! Oh, I tell you, its awful for a while, and I lay there and breathe kind o' easy, and wish my breath would stop, if it ain't wicked. But soon after, I get wide awake, and go to talking to the Lord, and says I, 'O Lord, it's all right, isn't it?' and he answers and says: 'All right.' Then I asks, 'They're safe in heaven, aren't they?' and he says, 'Safe for ever and ever.' So I feel as pleased as a child, and thinks I to myself, 'What ails you, and what are you crying about?' and then I get up and go to work, and seems as if there was comfort enough folded up in my heart to stretch over a whole lifetime. You see I used to think I trusted the Lord before, but now He's all in all, for I haven't anybody else. I can't tell exactly how to put it into words. I'm not happy, not in the way I used to be, and I get so hungry for the sight of them that's gone! But when I get to crying, the Lord hushes me, just as my mother used to, and says He, so kind and loving, 'Oh, just wait awhile!' Then says I, 'Yes, Lord, I will;' and how often I've told Him that He's been more comfort to me than my husband and all my children, and if I was to choose, I don't know as I should dare to be *happy* again, for fear I shouldn't be *blessed*."

"What singular fanaticism!" said Mrs. Fondersmith in astonishment. "I meant what a strange state of mind! I wish I could get into just such a way of thinking, though," sighed she, as she slowly paddled her way home through the mud.

SHAKESPEARE *versus* CALVIN.—In the course of a sermon, Rev. G. Gilfillan said that Shakespeare was a better representative of the Christian religion than Calvin. The one was a monk in reality though not in name; the other a man in the broadest sense of the term. The one was a Jew of the stoniest type; the other a Christian of the noblest grain. The one found evil in things good; the other a soul of goodness in things evil. The one wrote institutes of theology in elegant Latin, which were read only by scholars; the other, dramas in pure English, which were read by the civilized world, and would be read after Calvinism was, to say the least, no longer, as now, absurdly identified by many with Christianity.



## WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

**SWALLOWING A SUNBEAM.**—I have a brother—a wee little chap—who sometimes says things we think very odd. One day, as he was disposing of some bread and milk, he turned around to his mother, and said, "Oh, mother, I'm full of glory! There was a sunbeam on my spoon, and I swallowed it!"

**A CHILD'S LOVE.**—A Sunday-school teacher, speaking one day to his children upon the depravity of the human heart, asked his children if they knew any one who was always good; one of the class, prompted by simple and childlike affection, instantly replied, "Yes, sir, I know one: my mother."

**WAY TO AVOID CALUMNY.**—"If any one speaks ill of thee," said Epictetus, "consider whether he has truth on his side; and if so, reform thyself that his censures may not affect thee." When Anaximander was told that the very boys laughed at his singing—"Ay," says he, "then I must learn to sing better." Plato being told that he had many enemies who spoke ill of him—"It is no matter," said he; "I will live so that none shall believe them." Hearing, at another time, that an intimate friend of his had spoken detractingly of him—"I am sure he would not do it," said he, "if he had not some reason for it." This is the surest as well as the noblest way of drawing the sting out of a reproach, and the true method of preparing a man for that great and only relief against the pains of calumny—a good conscience.

**KITCHEN WORK.**—Many young ladies in our day look on kitchen work as so much drudgery, to be shunned whenever possible. It may possibly inspire some of them to better thoughts to know that the Royal Family of England consider excellence in this department as an important womanly virtue. An exchange says: But Queen Victoria, the highest gentlewoman in the land, did, down to the lamented death of the Prince, pay daily visits of inspection of her kitchen, pantry, confectionery, still room, and was proud of and did herself shew those rooms to her visitors when staying at the castle; and, carrying out the recognized principles of female duty, model kitchens were constructed at Windsor and Osborne, where all the princesses, from the eldest downwards, have passed a portion of each day in acquiring a knowledge of the various duties of domestic economy in the management of a household. In their model kitchen the princesses have daily practised the art of cookery, and also confectionery in all its various branches. There is a small store-room adjoining each kitchen, where each princess in turn gives out the stores, weighing or measuring each article, and making an entry thereof in a book kept for the purpose; besides which, the princesses make bread; and that is not all—they have a dairy where they churn butter and make cheese.

**THE GIFT OF GOD.**—God does not give us bread to eat, but He has given us a bountiful earth, and health and strength to obtain daily bread. He does not feed our souls with spiritual food, but He has given us a revelation of His will, and made ample provisions for the satisfying of all our spiritual wants. He invites us to improve our opportunities, to cultivate the gospel field, and thus feed on the bread of everlasting life.

**A GOOD DEFINITION.**—A missionary in Jamaica was questioning the little black boys on Matthew v., and asked, "Who are the meek?" A boy answered, "Those who give soft answers to rough questions."

**MUTUAL ATTACHMENT.**—The other evening a gentleman's button caught hold of the fringe of a lady's shawl. "I am attached to you," said the gentleman, laughing, while he was industriously trying to get loose. "The attachment is mutual," was the good-humoured reply.

**A CHURCH CONTRAST.**—The *Clerical Journal* admits that "a great scandal has been caused by the publication of the will of the late Bishop of Peterborough," whose personal property has been sworn under £80,000, besides very valuable real property, and who has bequeathed nothing to either servants or charities. So much for "the Right Reverend Dives in the Palace." Now for a picture of "Lazarus in Orders at the Gate," as drawn by a layman, who thus writes to the *Manchester Examiner*:—

"I visited (April 12) a house which may justly be called the house of famine, for it is impossible to describe the penury of the place. The master was almost a skeleton, like a long black cane with a little head on the top of it. His eyes were sunk very deep in his head, and had an expression of nervous anxiety which I never can forget. His cheeks were yellow as amber, and stretched over the bones like a lawyer's old deed over the spikes of iron railings. His beard had lost its colour from fear of the mouth, which, being so near, threatened to eat it from sheer hunger. His neck was as long as a crane's with the gullet sticking out as if it had been compelled by necessity to start out for sustenance. When he moved about the room I fancied I heard his bones rattle. I said something about rats and mice, when he grinned a ghastly smile, exclaiming, 'We are not troubled with those animals; they would find it hard to live in this house. Our butcher's bill for the last half-year was only 14s. 6d.'"

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